



Update from U.S. Senator John Cornyn

Special Texas Independence Day Edition

March 2, 2006

Thursday is Texas Independence Day. Many in the state's congressional delegation celebrate the day, even when we're here in Washington. We believe the core values that led Texans to independence—especially the desire of people everywhere to be free—should never be forgotten.

Border Security/Immigration

This week, the Senate finally begins consideration of immigration reform. It's overdue. In my view, the federal government has long neglected its responsibility to secure our borders and enforce our immigration laws, and the solution is now going to be difficult. I turned the national spotlight on border security concerns on Wednesday by holding a hearing, "Federal Strategies to End Border Violence," in my Judiciary subcommittee. Several Texas witnesses detailed the costly fallout along the border that has evolved after years of federal neglect. Majority Leader Frist has told me the full Senate will consider my comprehensive immigration reform proposal starting March 27.

Budget

The President's 2007 budget, received by the Budget Committee in February, takes a major step forward by cutting lower-priority spending while making certain our country is adequately defended. I was particularly encouraged to see a marked step-up in funding for border patrol agents, high-tech surveillance equipment, and development funds for a biometric card for legal workers. President Bush is adhering to pro-growth tax and economic policies. I support his commitment to say "no" to Washington special interests.

FEMA/Hurricane Recovery

Texas was omitted from the Administration's \$65 billion supplemental funding request for defense operations and hurricane recovery work. Given the state's generosity in opening its doors to hurricane victims, this oversight must be corrected. FEMA has awarded the state more than \$290 million in reimbursements to date, but I'm continuing to work with the entire delegation to make certain the state is treated fairly and made whole for its hurricane efforts.

National Security

I'm taking an active role this month as the Senate permanently reauthorizes the USA PATRIOT Act. The law provides tools that are absolutely critical to fighting the war on terror. We're also reviewing the proposed sale of port terminals from a British company to a Dubai company, a transaction that has properly caused new scrutiny of our homeland defense structure. I'm pleased with the added attention, and I'll continue to make certain the federal government pursues our long-term security interests as its number one priority.

New Web Site

We just completed upgrading my office Web site. Take a look. Use the site. There are new technology and information features, with frequent updates, and I think it's a valuable resource. I want Texans to have every opportunity to learn about their government's actions, and to let their voices be heard.

Come By and Say Hello

If you travel to Washington for business or pleasure, please consider visiting your U.S. Senate office. Every Tuesday morning when the Senate is in session, I host an open house from 9:00 to 9:30 a.m. Please

telephone Landon Bell at (202) 224-2934 to let us know you'll be coming, and to get the best directions.

Best regards,

Senator John Cornyn